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September 3, 1965

Dr. Robert F. Thorne
Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden
1500 North College Ave.
Claremont, California

Dear Dr. Thorne:

Thanks for the last bunch of identifications. It's nice to be able to give our subscribers answers that can be relied upon, instead of our poor guesses.

No. 1 - From Watertown, Wisconsin: "This tree or whatever you'd say, started in a flower pot which we do not remember planting. We first thought it to be an orange or lemon tree as the children used to eat and put the seeds in the pots, but it has sharp needles on it too, and people from California & Florida say fruit trees have no needles." (guess you'd have to have second-sight to figure this one out. We do know that our dwarf lemon tree had king-size thorns - MM)

No. 2 - From Riverdale, Fresno Co.: "Could you please identify this shrub? It grows rather freely - by that I mean the branches are long and loose, not compact. The small flowers are purple and close up at night."

No. 3 - From Mountain View, Santa Clara Co.: "Enclosed is a twig from a large bush bearing a mass of blue flowers. The friends who gave us the slip from which the plant developed call it a 'potato plant'. We have never been able to confirm that name. Can you advise us regarding the proper name?" (poor guess - solanum again? Maybe specimen No. 2 is also - I give up. MM)

No. 4 - From Modesto: "Am enclosing sample of a plant that has been growing on our ditch bank a number of years. Grows to at least 3 feet high. Stays in ground year-around. Can you identify? Is it classed as an herb? What is its value, if any?"

Lots of luck. Have an idea about the last specimen, but think I have given you enough poor guesses to be amused at for this time.

Sincerely,

CALIFORNIA FARMER

By Marjorie McAlinden
Marjorie McAlinden

MM:sc
Enc.